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We claim:

5 1. A method to analyze the condition of a functional fluid comprising:

(1) obtaining a sample of the functional fluid,

(2) placing the sample of the functional fluid on a test medium,

(3) reacting the functional fluid with an indicator in the test medium,
and

10 (4) analyzing visually the results of the reaction,

resulting in the determination of the condition of the functional fluid.

15 2. The method of claim 1 comprising the steps of determining the
condition of the functional fluid selected from the group consisting visually
comparing the test medium against a set of comparative visual indicia
depicting the functional fluid in at least two different conditions as a guide;
using the printed instructions as a guide; and combinations thereof.

20 3. The method of in claim 1, wherein the test medium comprise paper,
cellulosic material polymeric fiber, polypropylene woven fabric, nonwoven
fabric, metal, glass, plastic, composite material or combinations thereof.

25 4. The method of claim 3 wherein the test medium comprises paper,
cellulosic material, cellulose nitrate, cellulose acetate wood, chromatography
paper, filter paper, polymeric fibers, natural fibers, finely woven fabrics,
metal, glass, glass micro fiber, sintered glass, silica coated surfaces,
alumina coated surfaces , thin layer chromatography plates, plastic, plastic
laminated material, composites or combinations thereof.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the test medium has a property selected from the group consisting of a porosity, a density, a wicking ability and combinations thereof to provide rapid dispersion on the functional fluid.

5 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the indicator is selected from the group consisting of acid indicators, base indicators, pH indicators, metal indicators, redox indicators, organic indicators, inorganic salts indicators, absorption indicators, dyes and combinations thereof.

10 7. The method of claim 5 wherein the indicator is selected from the group consisting of malachite green, brilliant green, methyl green, picric acid, cresol red, crystal violet, metanil yellow, cresol red, crystal violet, metanil yellow, mpcresol purple, thymol blue, p-Xylenol blue, thymol blue sodium salt, quinaldine red, tropaeolin OO, 2,6-dinitrophenol, 15 dimethylaminoazobenzene, bromochlorophenol blue, bromophenol blue, bromophenol blue sodium salt, congo red, methyl orange, 2,5-dinitrophenol, 1-naphthyl, bromocresol green, bromocresol green sodium salt, alizarin S, methyl red, methyl red sodium salt, bromophenol red, chlorophenol red, hematoxylin litmus, bromocresol purple, nitrophenol, bromoxylenol blue, 20 alizarin, bromothymol blue, bromothymol blue sodium salt, nitrazine yellow, phenol red, phenol red sodium salt, cresol red, 3-nitrophenol, neutral red, 1-naphtholphthalein, o-cresolphthalein, phenolphthalein, thymolphthalein, alizarin yellow, alkali blue, epsilon blue, indigo carmine, Nile blue, acid fuchsin, fluorescein, eosin, phloxine, rose bengal, rhodamine and 25 combinations thereof.

8. The method of claim 5 wherein the indicator is selected from the group consisting of Alizarin Complexone, Alizarin S, Arsenazo III, Aurintricarboxylic acid, 2,2'-Bipyridine, Bromopyrogallol Red, Calcon 30 (Eriochrom Blue Black R), Calconcarboxylic acid, Chrome Azurol S, Chromotropic acid, disodium salt, Cuprizone, 5-(4-Dimethylamino-benzylidene)rhodanine, Dimethylglyoxime, 1,5-Diphenylcarbazide, Dithizone,

Eriochrome Black T , Eriochrome Blue SE , Eriochrome Blue Black B, Eriochrome Cyanine R , Fluorescein Complexone, Glyoxalibis(2-hydroxylanil) , Hematoxylin, 8-Hydroxyquinoline, 2-Mercaptobenzothiazole, Methylthymol Blue , Murexide , 1-Nitroso-2-naphthol, 2-Nitroso-1-naphthol, Nitroso-R-salt, 1,10-Phenanthroline, Phenylfluorone , Phthalein Purple, 1-(2-Pyridylazo)-naphthol, 4-(2-Pyridylazo)resorcinol, Pyrogallol Red, Sulfonazo III, 5-Sulfosalicylic acid , 4-(2-Thiazolylazo)resorcinol, Thorin, Thymolthalexon, Tiron, Tolurnr-3,4-dithiol, Xylenol Orange, Zincon and combinations thereof.

9. The method of claim 5 wherein the indicator is selected from the group consisting of Neutral Red, Safranine T or O, Indigo Carmine, Methylene Blue, Thionin, Thymolindophenol, 2,6-Dichlorophenolindophenol, Gallocyanine, Nile Blue, Variamine Blue, Diphenyl amine, Diphenylamine-4-sulfonic acid, barium salt, Tris(2,2dipyridyl)iron(II) sulfate, N-phenylanthranilic acid , Ferroin, Nitroferroin, 5,6-Dimethylferroin, 4-Amino-4'-methyldiphenylamine, Diphenylbenzindinedisulfonic acid, o-Dianisidine, 3,3'-Dimethylnaphthidine, 3,3'-Dimethylnaphthidine disulfonic acid and combinations thereof.

10. The method of claim 1 comprising a marker substance in the test medium that is compatible with the lubricant and wherein the marker is selected from the group consisting of metals, metal salts, metal oxides, metal coordination complexes, other substances and combinations thereof.

11. The method of claim 1 comprising a developing agent is selected from the group consisting of mineral or organic acids and the like, basic substances, oxidizing agents, reducing agents, chelating agents and combinations thereof.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the test medium is treated with a developer or detector reagent for the purposes of reacting with a marker

substance to cause a color change, chemiluminescence, phosphorescence, fluorescence or combinations thereof.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein the test medium has a solvent.

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14. The method of claim 13 wherein the solvent is selected from the group consisting of aliphatic and aromatic hydrocarbons, alcohols, glycols, glycol ethers, lower alcohols, such as methanol, ethanol and propanol, ethers, esters, water and combinations thereof.

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15. The method of claim 1 wherein the functional fluid is lubricating oils, engine oil, transmission fluids, greases, gear oils, hydraulic fluids, metalworking fluids, antifreeze fluids, coating system fluids, cooling system fluids, farm tractor fluids, transformer fluids, fuels, diesel, gasoline, biofuels, emulsified fuels, or mixtures thereof.

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16. A test kit for the analysis of functional fluids comprising a chemically treated test medium and a method to determine the quality of the condition of the fluid selected from the group consisting of instructions, pictures, drawing, photographs and combinations thereof.

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17. A test kit of claim 16 further comprising a set of comparative visual indicia comprising two representations of a functional fluid disposed upon a same, similar of different test media and wherein one is in unacceptable condition and

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18. A test kit of claim 16, wherein the test medium is treated with a developer or detector reagent for the purposes of reacting with a marker substance to cause a color change, chemiluminescence, phosphorescence, fluorescence or combinations thereof.

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19. A test kit of claim 16, wherein said test medium is treated with an acidic substance, basic substance or combinations thereof.

5 20. A test kit for the analysis of a functional fluid comprising a sealed package containing a cellulosic test medium treated with a solution of about at least 0.1% to w Alizarin dissolved in about a 90% w mixture of isopropyl alcohol and about a 10% w laurel alcohol and capable of absorbing the functional fluid; and a plurality of comparative visual indicia depicting at least
10 two different conditions of the functional fluid disposed upon said test medium; and a descriptive text corresponding to said comparative visual indicia.